

A True
DECLARATION
concerning the surrender of
BRIDGEWATER.

Written by Coll. EDMOND WYNDHAM,

To vindicate him from some false and scandalous reports, raised by some malicious Adversaries.



Printed in the Year 1646.

THE
OF
BY
AND

BY
AND

TO
BY
AND



OF
AND



It is an old saying, that it is better to be fortunate then wise; I may truly adde in what concerne my selfe, with relation to the scandalls that are throwne upon me, by the practise and mallice of such as endeavour to traduce my reputation; that it is better to be successfull then honest. For the one I am confident would have preserved me in a fayre opinion and good esteeme amongst all men, whereas the other only continues my credit with those that personally know me; and by that knowledge are confirmed in their beleefe of my integrity. I did beleefe that my owne innocency had beene a sufficient shield to guard and defend me from the malicious reports of my enemies, whose rumors being false, and wanting the basis of truth, for their foundation, I imagined they would quickly vanish and not prejudice my honour; and therefore I contemned and despised them and their authors. But finding that these untrue suggestions, although they have no colour of truth, by the flie and subtil insinuations of my adversaries, have gained credit with some noble personages, whose satisfaction I desire: and also to vindicate my owne reputation, lest silence should conclude my guilt, I have thought fit and am perswaded by some friends, to justifie my selfe by this true relation, under my owne hand of my behaviour in my command, which I shall maintaine with my life, against the scandalls and aspersions of all my adversaries. And I am the rather induced hereunto, because I have now nothing left me, but my reputation, which in the cause I have undertaken cannot truly be blemisht. And I shall I hope by this Apology, (although it be an inconvenience, that truth and honesty must be enforced thereunto, whilst treachery and falshood walke openly without checke or controule) satisfie all ingenuous and honorably disposed persons, that it remains yet spotlesse. For if I am guiltie of any crime, it cannot be lesse in betraying the trust reposed in me then trechery or

cowardice, or both, and I must justifie my selfe that I am guilty of neither, but if my accusers had beene more moderate, and had laid to my charge, folly, rashnesse, or indiscretion, I should have beene so modest as not to have justified all my actions: For I should have confes'd that souldiery was not originally my profession, and that I might be guilty of some such imperfections. But the scandall of treason is of too venemous a nature to be digested, for it not onely destroys me, but dishonours my Familie, and staines my Posteritie. And therefore to wipe away this blemish, I have put pen to paper, and doe heere deliver the impartiall truth of my proceedings, which if any man can contradict, I shall desire no favour in their forbearance. I know well that guilt is of the nature of filthy odours, who by stirring become more unfavoury, but vertue and integrity is of a contrary qualiry, which by sitting and searhing becomes the more pure and refined, and therefore in confidence of my owne innocency, I doe publish this Declaration, wherein I doe challenge all my enemies to detect me, if I be guilty of any miscarriage of so high a nature as is laid to my charge, hoping hereby to make it appeare that I am free and cleere from those blacke calumnies and slanders, which malice, envy, and detraction have throwne upon me.

I confesse that according to the dictates of my owne conscience and reason, and according unto the obligation I stood engaged unto his Majestie, as well by my common allegiance, as by my more perticular duty of personall service, in the beginning of these unhappy differences and divisions of the Kingdome, I engaged my selfe on his Majesties party, wherein I have constantly persever'd either in acting or suffering untill this day, concurring with those of the contrary party, onely in hating detestable newtrality. According to my best ability I did diligently execute all such Commissions as I did receive from his Majesty, and in the place of Governour of Bridgewater, did use my utmost endeavour to preserve that Towne, and to retaine the people in obedience to his Majestie. But I, like other of his Majesties Commanders, wanted the sinews of Warre, and was enjoyned a hard taske, to make bricke without strawe, to fortifie a Towne, victuall it, leavy men, provide

vide arms and ammunition, with all things necessary for the defence thereof, without money to effect it. I acknowledge I had an assignment of contribution, after long solicitation to a fit proportion to doe the worke; but this was presently anticipated by particular orders of my superiour Officers, and by free quarterings, so that very little money could be gathered by my Collectors, but all or the most part was diverted into other channells, especially of late for the maintenance of the new erected Garrisons of Lamport and Burrowe. And the Lord Gorings horse by their free quarter and trencher money so impoverish the Country, that for the space of six monthes before the surrender of Bridgewater, I am assured I did not receive three hundred pounds, I beleve not two hundred pounds towards the payment of my Garison, and the furnishing of it with all things necessary for the defence thereof. I did often complaine of my wants, both to the Princes Councell, and to the superiour Officers of his Majesties armies, so that my defects were apparently knowne unto them; yet could have no redresse, untill the Country was possesst by the Parliaments forces, and then it was too late to make use of those unprofitable graunts, which were as difficultly obtained, as if they had beene for my proper benefit, and not for his Majesties use. And yet during those last 6 months, I had my men, ammunition, and victualls, which I had procured by my own expence and credit, commanded out of my Garrison, to supply the armie before Taunton, whilst it was under Sir R. Grenvil, and afterward under my Lord Goring, which was promised to be restored, but the performance came too slow. That the Towne lay conveniently to be fortified is most apparent, and that with expence it might have beene made very strong is most certain, but that it was so by the then made fortifications the contrary is manifest through want of meanes to effect the same. For almost halfe the Towne which is called Eastover, when Sir Thomas Fairfax came before it, had onely a dike cast without any fashioning or turving of the workes, or forming of the flankers, so that although the Grasse were a good defence in the outside, yet the inside could hardly be made use of as a convenient breast worke.

But that which was most to my prejudice, was, that such souldiers

diers as I had raised in that County by my interest, were alwayes commanded away out of my Garrison, so that when the enemy came before the town, I had not above two hundred and fifty of my old souldiers left in the town, besides townesmen, the rest were made up by Pembroke-shire men, taken by my Lord Gerrard in that County, and sent over to recruit Prince Ruperts Regiment after the battell of Naseby, and I had likewise some of Sir John Stawells regiment, and some few souldiers belonging unto Bristoll Garrison, which were newly come from Lamport. These came into the town not above three dayes before the enemy came before it, and the Pembroke-shire men were such, for the most part, as had formerly served the Parliament. They were in number about five hundred, and had the guard of that part of the towne, called Eastover, divided from the rest of the town by the river, and were appointed to defend two third parts of that line, the other third part being to be maintained by those of Sir John Stawells regiment, and those Bristoll souldiers which came from Lamport, so that there was in that part of the town about seven hundred souldiers, I having put more men into it then into the other part of the town, because the line was not perfected, and because Sir Thomas Fairfax with most of his horse and foot lay on that side of the town, Major Generall Massey keeping guards on the other side, where I had placed those of my own regiment, the townesmen, and some voluntiers. Most of these souldiers were upon the guard every night, doing constant duty twelve nights together, and my self was continually with them all that time, visiting one guard or other, all the night.

Friday, the 11th of July, Sir Thomas Fairfax drew neer the town, and that night and Saturday placed severall guards within Musket-shot of our works, and so continued without advancing further untill he stormed the town, which was Munday morning the 21. of July, between one and two of the clock, at which time he brought on two bridges to passe his men over the Grasse, which were so narrow, that I believe not above two men could passe over abreast, and one of these bridges failed in the bringing on, so that if these Pembroke-shire men had been stout and honest, it being their guard that he attempted to force, it is apparent

how

how
as I
they
ou
out
the
and
shel
have
alth
for
shot
was
Pap
agai

A
ficer
East
Tow
secu
foot
thof
with
coun
enen
into
and
abo
chie
Offi
ly I
Offi
I co
that

how fruitlesse his attempt must have proved. I was then in Eastover, and as I conceived, did heare some noyse of the enemies preparation before they came on, and for the more certain discovery thereof, did send out twenty musketeers under the command of a Sergeant, being drawn out of Prince Ruperts regiment, who at their return, assured mee, that the enemy moved not, yet immediatly after that, the enemy came on, and marched with their bridge over Castlefield, where they had no shelter, from our shot, and if our men had not been false, they must needs have done great execution upon them; but these Pembrokeshire men, although they fired very well, did little or no execution on the enemy; for they either shot over their heads when they shot bullets, or else shot nothing but powder, as they themselves confessed after the town was surrendred, upbraiding divers Protestant Officers, calling them Papists, and asking them, whether they believed that they would fight against the Parliament to defend Papist Rogues?

And yet I am assured, that there was not one Papist that was an Officer within the Garrison. At the same time that the enemy attempted Eastover, I hearing great vollies of shot from the other side of the Town, conceiving that the enemy might enter there, thinking this part secure, because it was so well man'd, having left a reserve of horse and foot on that side of the water, to be ready on all occasions to second those who guarded the line, and to prevent the enemies assaults, I rode with much haste round the line on the other side of the town to encourage the townsmen, and to observe if there were any danger of the enemies entring there; but before I could ride round the line, and return into Eastover again, the Pembrokeshire men had laid down their arms, and when I came back, were helping the enemy over the works, and above fourty of them entred. Major Michel, who commanded in chief over that Regiment, being shot, was carried off, and I found no Officer there, the reserve of foot, and most of the horse being gone, only I espied at a distance, five or sixe horse, which were most of them Officers, amongst them were L. Col. Jones, and Cornet Welsh, whom I commanded to joyn with me, and to indeavour to beat out the enemy that was entred, which they did, and we forced back the enemy to the

top

top of the work, where wee could not charge them further, by reason of the steepnesse of the bancks, where the enemy defended themselves with pikes, and our own men mingled with the enemy, and fired upon us, and kill'd L. Col. Jones, being the next man unto me: I perceiving that it was impossible with horse to beat the enemy from that stand they made on the top of the works, wheeled about my horse, intending to ride to the other side of the line, to command from thence a party of Musketeers to force off the enemy; but when I came to crosse the street, I found that by the help of these treacherous villains, the drawbridge was broken down, and the enemies horse entred into Eastover, so that I found there were then so many of the enemies entred into that part of the town, that it was impossible to beat them thence; whereupon I indeavoured in the best manner I could, to secure the retreat of as many souldiers as might be, out of Eastover, into the other part of the town, beyond the river; but my souldiers being in disorder, and confusion, the enemy coming on so fast, hindred divers that were endeavouring to get over the river, and some were slain, amongst which L. Col. Glanville was one, who escaped from the enemy at the fight at Lamport, and came into the town, just as Sir Thomas Fairfax came before it. The enemy immediatly brought up their Cannon to force the drawbridge, which was the passage over the river, and by the shelter of the houses, came within Pistol-shot thereof, and before the chaines were fastened, made some shot through him, and killed and wounded some men, yet we secured the bridge, and notwithstanding all their Cannon-shot, which played continually upon us, we made two barricadoes within the bridge, from whence I stird not, untill I saw those works perfected. The enemy that night had raised three other batteries, the one in Castle-field, the other in the way going towards Taunton, and the third, at the end of West-street; these played most part of the day into the town, besides a Morter-piece, which they shot often out of Eastover. After wee had finished the works about the bridge, I having discovered where their Cannon lay, which battered us there, I caused the wreathed Gun to be brought down to that side of the town, and to be planted where I conceived it might most annoy the enemy,

enemy and beat them off from their Cannon, there being a Blind made
 and no other security for their Gunners, which succeeded accordingly,
 for hereby we not onely beat them from that Gun, but also with this
 peece we battered Master Harvies house and drove the enemy thence,
 which was a great safety unto us. The enemy and we lay now onely
 separated by the river, they having houses and mudde walls on their
 side of the river, as usefull for the safety of their souldiers, as our works,
 houses, and mudde walls were unto us. Onely their walls had thatch of
 strawe for their coverings, which we fired, and so made them too
 warme for them, to make use of them that day. The river was so dar-
 ble at low water for horse and foot to passe over. I know not what ap-
 prehension the enemy had, but that day about foure of the clocke in
 the afternoone, they seemed to quit Eastover in some disorder, and
 drew off their Guns from their battery in Castle Feild, and fired that
 part of the Towne they were possesed off, whereupon we sallied, and
 seized their Cannon wherewith they battered the drawe bridge, and
 we tooke divers armes they had left behind them, and brought them
 into the Towne, but wanted conveniencie to draw off their Cannon,
 because we had barrowcadoed the bridge. But within a short time the
 enemy returned, and placed their guardes againe in Eastover. By this
 storme we had lost at least six hundred souldiers, all the Welsh being
 turned to serve the enemy except about forty, which were in the inner
 Towne: most of Sir Iohn Stawells Regiment, and the Bristol souldiers
 were taken prisoners, so that I had remaining about five hundred soul-
 diers and townsmen, that bore armes, the rest being lost in the storme
 of Eastover, besides we lost two iron Guns, some ammunition and pro-
 vision. Notwithstanding this losse I so encouraged those souldiers I
 had left, telling them that now the traytors were gone, we should be the
 more secure, having none but such as were faithfull remaining, and as
 we had fewer souldiers, so we had lesse ground to defend. That night
 we wrought very hard to lync our thinne workes, and to raise Blinds
 to prevent the enemy out of Eastover, who might else in divers places
 command the inside of our Curtaines. The next morning being Tues-
 day about the same houre that the enemy storm'd us, the day before,

B

they

they attempted us again, but with no success, their souldiers not daring to assault our works, but shouting very hard at distance; at length we treated without gaining any advantage, which was a great encouragement to my souldiers, being now confident, that the enemy durst not attempt our works, and that what they did the day before was by intelligence with the Pembroke-shire men.

That afternoon about two of the clocke Sir Thomas Fairefax sent his third and last summons for the surrender of the Towne, to which I returned a positive refusal. Immediately after a house was fired towards the west part of the Towne, and I going to give order for the quenching thereof, had not staid long but newes was brought that the Towne was fired in divers other places, and some boyes apprehended who were actors therein, confessing that they had been hired to doe it by some of the Pembroke-shire souldiers. A Livetenant likewise was taken endeavouring as was pretended to fire the Church, conceiving the Magazine had beene there. The boyes confession was a certain proofe, but the evidence against the Livetenant was not so cleare. A house was likewise fired where the Gunners kept all their case and round shot, and such other ammunition as was prepared for our Ordnance; and likewise most of our match was there consumed, in short the fire grew so great and terrible that the Towne seemed all of one flame. Those houses that were fired neere the lyne, made the place too hot and dangerous for any souldiers to abide there: the townsmen all ran off their guards to secure their goods and houses, and drew off with them divers souldiers, by giving them money to assist them therein. So that the lyne was generally quitted, the Towne likely to be burnt all to ashes, the enemy ready to assault us, and few or none could be gotten to make defence, most of our provision and ammunition burnt and destroyed by the fire. And the most part of the souldiers and people crying out to make conditions, whereupon I called a Councell of warre, and by the advice of all or far the greater part of the Officers that were there present, I believe I may truly say by all of them that were then there, it was thought fit to send unto Sir Thomas Fairfax for conditions, which with much importunity I was perswaded to doe,

after

after some of the chiefe Officers and souldiers of the Garrison had by the appointment of the Councell of warre viewed the Towne and returned answer that it was not possible to be held.

All that were then present can bear me witness, with what difficulty I was perswaded to hearken unto conditions, and what industry I used to encourage the souldiers to defend it, but I have been since told by some of good credit, that there were others as solicitous to dissuade them from it, being more studious to preserve their lives then their honours, telling the townesmen and the souldiers, that there was no reason, now that they might have conditions, that they should all sacrifice their lives, to satisfie the rashness of the Governour, who it may be, could not find means to reconcile himself to the Parliament; but for them, their offences were not so great, but that they might make satisfaction, which most of them have since done; and after their coming unto London, were quickly released; by which perswasions, and other discouragements, especially that of the fire, the whole town being probable to be burnt down to the ground, and most of the ammunition and provision being already consumed, there was a necessity of yeelding the town, and of accepting such Articles as the Generall would give us, he having intelligence of our condition and understanding it as well as our selves, both souldiers and inhabitants pressing mee thereunto, dissenting their guards, and applying themselves wholly to extinguish the fire, which now seemed to overspread the whole town. Whereupon it was agreed, that we should draw up Articles such as we intended to yeeld the town upon, and send them unto the Generall, which was accordingly done, and Mr. Ellyot sent with them, who immediately returned, with other Articles, subscribed by Sir Thomas Fairfax, which were such as afterward we were enforced to surrender the town upon; by which, both officers and souldiers became prisoners, to which I returned answer by Sir Jo. Mele, and Mr. Ellyot, that we would not accept those conditions, and that unless we might have our liberties, we were resolved to abide the greatest extremity, and

So gave order that the parley should break off. And I endeavoured in the mean time, to draw men to the works, for the defence of the town; but whilst I was endeavoring to draw men to the line, Mr. Ellyot returned with a positive denial from the Generall, that he would give no other conditions; whereupon it was unanimously resolved by all the Officers and Gentlemen present, that we should accept those conditions offered by Sir Thomas Fairfax. And I appeal unto all, who were at the meeting and transacting of the treaty, whether, when it was objected by such Officers and Commissioners as were present, that I should be held guilty of all the blood that should be afterwards spilt, if I accepted not the conditions; and whether they did not demand what I would fight for, or what I would defend, for the town would be consumed unto ashes; and whether my answer were not, that I would fight for my liberty, or to have an honourable Sepulture in those ashes, but my perswasions could not prevail with them, for all unanimously prest me to the yeelding up of the town; this is the truth, which I will justifie, concerning the delivering up of the town of Bridgewater, wherein I will appeale to all who were there present, whether I did ever absent my self out of apprehension of danger, or did not on all occasions shew my self ready to expresse my duty and my loyalty with the hazard of my life.

And whereas it hath been objected, that I sold the town, I desire all the world, to prove that ever I held any correspondence or intelligence with the enemy, or ever received any favour or friendship from the Parliament, or their Armie, nay, I have been so tender in looking to the Parliament for any of those things which they ordinarily afford to men in my condition, that I have forbore to sue for them, fearing, that those, who on no probable ground are so bold to scandal me, would easily be induced to misconstrue both our intentions, and interpret civilities disguised corruptions. I confesse, after the surrender of the town, I was civilly treated by the Generall, and some of his Officers, and out of that civility, I am confident they will vindicate mee from all these aspersions,

asperſions, if they be required thereunto. I loſt all I had in the town, which in goods and houſholdſtuffe, I am ſure was of a conſiderable value, not preſerving ſo much as mine, my wifes, or childrens clothes, which indeed were allowed us by the Generall, but after taken away by the Committee, and for ready money, the Generall allowed me to carry out thirty pounds, but truly I had not ten pounds when I left the town, but was enforced to borrow money to bring me to London, for I ſpent not only what I had allowed from his Maſteſty, but mine own revenue was employed in that ſervice, as thoſe who kept my accounts can cleerely juſtifie, beſides what I borrowed and ingaged my ſelf, to ſatiſſie for the publike ſervice.

There was never any rationall man that was corrupt, but it was for ſome end or advantage, I am ſure I could have none in it, for I loſt all that I had in the world, not preſerving a peniworth of any goods; nor had I any conditions for my other eſtate, which hath been ever ſince in ſequeſtration. This juſtification I offer to the view of the world, and do challenge all my adverſaries to produce but a ſingle circumſtance to make their ſcandalls probable, which if they ſhall offer any, I ſhall not doubt, but by the teſtimony of perſons of honour, cleerly to convince their malice. All that I ſhall hereby deſire, is, that having in this adventure loſt all my eſtate, I may by the candor of thoſe that read it, be preſerved in my reputation, and then, although few be greater ſufferers then my ſelf, yet none ſhall be more contented, becauſe in the whole progreſſe of this buſineſſe, I did nothing with relation to the truſt repoſed in me, that awakens my conſcience to repentance.

F I N I S.